

# THE TIME SEAM

BLACKSTON GOLD • BOOK TWO

SYLVIA KELSO

Dorian Wild has a car, a good apartment, a junior partnership in a law firm, and a solid relationship. Then a seeming ghost walks out of an elevator floor balancing a miner's panning dish on top of her head.

Suddenly Dorian Wild also has danger, tragedy, mystery, break-ins, mayhem, an unscrupulous mega-corp on her trail, and a whole new concept of reality. Especially when it involves a nineteenth-century Irish activist called Jimmy Keenighan, who has ended up in her time and place for reasons neither of them understands. Except that the whole tangle of gold mines old and new, dangers past and present, time-shifts, deceit and violence, centers on the town of Blackston, with its once rich and still potential goldfields, and the great mine called the Solitaire. Perhaps, somewhere among the mysteries, there may be another ghost: a shadow, a question, a possibility called Solitaire Two.

*The Time Seam* is the conclusion of *The Solitaire Ghost*, a fast moving combination of suspense and time-romance, played out in an Australian setting. The story knits together the historic past and the twenty-first century present, and discovers many common elements, especially around the ever-disturbing presence of gold.







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**FIVE STAR**

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Set in 11 pt. Plantin.

#### LIBRARY OF CONGRESS CATALOGING-IN-PUBLICATION DATA

Kelso, Sylvia.

The time seam / Sylvia Kelso. — 1st ed.

p. cm. — (Blackston gold ; bk. 2)

ISBN-13: 978-1-4328-2547-8 (hardcover)

ISBN-10: 1-4328-2547-X (hardcover)

1. Time travel—Fiction. 2. Gold mines and mining—Fiction. 3.

Australia—Fiction. I. Title.

PR9619.4.K456T56 2011

823'.92—dc22

2011025024

First Edition. First Printing: October 2011.

Published in 2011 in conjunction with Tekno Books.

Printed in the United States of America

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 15 14 13 12 11



For my paternal aunts,  
Ethel and Doris,  
who didn't often tell yarns,  
but who did write poetry.  
Thanks for the genes.



## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Thanks to Lois Bujold, Vreni and Peter Murphy, and Anne Roberts for reading this manuscript in process, and offering good comments as well as encouragement, to Rosaleen Love for wip reading and also for first remarking on the quartz graves, and to Pat Wrede for suggesting *The Time Seam* as a title.

I would also like to thank the following people who supplied vital information in special areas. Any errors remaining are my mistakes, or deliberate divergences from what they said.

Narelle Houston, for helping construct the law firm of Lewis and Cotton, and general legal advice.

Pat Crawley, of Cookstown, County Tyrone, for his great generosity to a stranger, particularly in showing me around the area, and in filling out Jimmy's backstory.

Les Scully, of Industrial Pumps Townsville, for assistance with the layout and details of Ben Morar, and stories about small Australian mines in general.

The female officer of the Queensland Police who supplied information on police procedure at serious traffic accidents, and whose name I have most reprehensibly lost.

Senior Constable Peter Shelton of the Queensland Police, who sketched out police procedure for major non-traffic accidents, and who suggested the Superintendent's BBQ.

Leith Golding, for IT advice, especially on the ins and outs of CDs.

And Mike Rubenach, for a wealth of data on geology, geolo-

## Acknowledgments

gists and gold mines, but most for telling me the yarn that became the centre of Chris's story and the trigger for this book.



## SYNOPSIS OF BOOK ONE

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Dorian Wild is a junior partner in the law firm of Lewis and Cotton in the North Australian town of Ibisville. She is happy with her job and her partner Chris Keogh, senior geologist at the Ben Morar gold mine outside the old goldfield town of Blackston. Then a figure in nineteenth-century prospector's clothes walks out of the floor in her building elevator and balances a panning dish on her head before he disappears.

His further appearances involve Dorian's friends and fellow partners Laura McFadden and Anne Lee as they search for a link with problems at Ben Morar, where Chris has found a rich new goldfield with his revolutionary statistical analysis model. The firm is under threat of takeover. When Chris is killed in a suspicious car accident Dorian and her partners confront the mining megacorporation Pan-Auric, whose plans for his new field had made Chris resign in protest, asking Dorian to find a good environmental lawyer.

As threats and dangers escalate, Dorian finds herself falling through the "fold in time" which Chris thinks has brought the "ghost" into her world. A harrowing experience in nineteenth-century Blackston leaves her ready to abandon the project, but the "ghost" keeps appearing, and similar circumstances produce a bond between them. When Dorian goes to Blackston to confront George Richards, the Ben Morar mine manager, the ghost appears in daylight during a historical pageant. This time, it seems, he has come into Dorian's world for good.

Dorian learns that the “ghost” is actually Jimmy Keenighan, Northern Irish Catholic activist first for Land Rights, then for Trade Unionism. He was a compositor and reporter on the Blackston newspaper, *The North Queensland Miner*, at whose office both have crossed the “fold in time.” The bond they have previously felt strengthens to attraction as they try to understand why Jimmy is there, then to stop Pan-Auric’s plan for the new field, which, they find, is right under Blackston, “on top” of the famous old deep mine, the Solitaire.

## CHAPTER 1

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Dorian phased slowly back to wakefulness: where am I, when, how. Why?

Blackston. The Park Street Motel. Coming up to see George, confront him about Ben Morar. Screw him down, find out definitively: why did he sell out, and now, what does Pan-Auric plan? Where is this damn mine Chris found?

Did he sack Chris or not?

I sent the report. Memory rushed back with almost the original rage. I got nothing useful out of him and I sent the report to Dani, I talked to Anne and Laura, then I went uptown for lunch. And in the street . . .

The historical pageant. People dressed like the old times, like that time. Old Blackston, where the time-fold took me. But it was here and now. This time, old Blackston came to me.

Now I'm in bed in the Park Street Motel, and he's in the room across from me. Breathing. Talking. Living flesh and blood. Not just a ghost, a time-collision any longer. Jimmy. Jimmy Keenighan. A name, a life, a connection I never expected. Now I do know why we kept colliding. I do know, why me.

Physical answers, a bruising recollection. And then the cause of that strange split in her inner landscape, half lingering sweetness, half painful as a day-old bruise.

I kissed someone last night. He wanted it, and I wanted it. Whatever happened then.

And it's only five weeks since Chris . . .

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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**Sylvia Kelso** lives in North Queensland, Australia, and has been telling stories for as long as she remembers. She has previously published three fantasy novels with Five Star: the well-received *Everran's Bane*, its sequel, *The Moving Water*, which was a finalist for an Australian Aurealis genre fiction award, and *The Red Country*.

Sylvia Kelso lives in a house with a lot of trees, but no cats or dogs. She makes up for this by playing Celtic music on a penny-whistle, and is learning the fiddle as well.







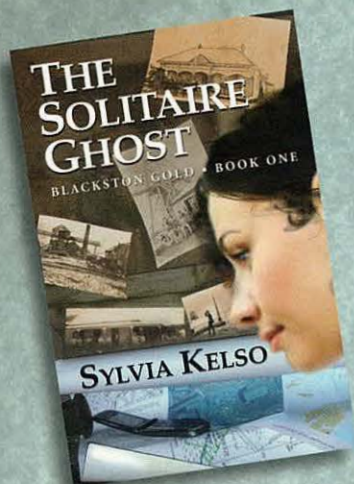
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Author photograph by Elisabeth Vonnarburg

## PRAISE FOR *THE SOLITAIRE GHOST*:



"*The Solitaire Ghost* gripped me from the first page to the last. What joy to find a book where everyone is whip-smart, heroes and villains alike. Vivid atmosphere, depth of feeling, and a cracking fast pace made this almost impossible to put down."

—Caroline Stevermer,  
co-author of *Sorcery and Cecilia*

## PRAISE FOR *EVERRAN'S BANE*:

"The prose is dense and chewy, the worldbuilding complex and colorful, and plotting kept me turning pages till four in the morning . . . not without sly humor . . . as well as heartbreak and heroism. Highly recommended."

—Lois McMaster Bujold, author of *Nebula* and *Hugo*-winning  
*Paladin of Souls*

## PRAISE FOR *THE RED COUNTRY*:

". . . a lovely book."

—SF Crowsnest

Jacket design by Caroline Husher

U.S. Hardcover



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ISBN-13: 978-1-4328-2547-8  
ISBN-10: 1-4328-2547-X



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